U.S.-ARGENTINA JOINT STATEMENT

FIRST JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COOPERATION BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARGENTINA AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

September 2-3, 2010

The Republic of Argentina and the United States of America convened their first U.S.-Argentina Joint Committee Meeting (JCM) on Science and Technology Cooperation on September 2-3, 2010.

Delegates from both countries met at the Academia Nacional de Ciencias Exactas, Fisicas, y Naturales in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The JCM took place under the auspices of the Agreement related on Scientific and Technical Cooperation between the Government of the United States and the Government of the Argentine Republic, signed on April 7, 1972 *(entered into force April 11, 1972).*

The JCM took place to commemorate the year of Argentina's bicentennial, and follows shortly after the meeting of Foreign Minister Timerman and Secretary Clinton on August 11, 2010 in Washington, DC.

Dr. Alejandro Ceccato, Secretary of Scientific and Technological Coordination, headed the Argentine delegation, and Mr. Lawrence J. Gumbiner, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Science, Space and Health led the U.S. delegation.

The Joint Committee exchanged views on each side's trends in science and technology and major science and technology policies. Dr. Ceccato explained Argentina's policy direction in terms of science and technology. In return, Mr. Gumbiner explained major science and technology policy developments under the Obama administration.

The meeting included delegates representing ministries, technical agencies, academic institutions, and national laboratories from both countries related to science and technology.

Both parties affirmed the role of science and technology in terms of enhancing and complementing the active bilateral agenda taking place in the current political, economic, environmental and commercial area and presented current policies and scientific and technological topics of interest in their respective country.

Parties examined the status of the current scientific and technological links and cooperative activities being developed among government agencies, research centers, and academic institutions and universities of the United States and Argentina in the fields of basic science and astronomy, climate change, energy, earth science, forensic science, agriculture and food safety, health, nanotechnology, and biotechnology. The delegates discussed new and potential collaborative activities that will enhance the development of professional and scientific networks, build on capacities, strengthen institutional links, expand joint research, advance science knowledge and technology for innovation, and seek collaborative opportunities in the area of science and innovation for civil safety and protection and global security.

Delegates from both Parties emphasized areas of mutual interest to advance bilateral collaborations highlighting major topics and activities in science and technology to be developed by both countries.

The topics the Parties highlighted included the following collaborative initiatives:

Basic Sciences
Nanotechnology
Earth, atmospheric, and space research
Alternative energy research
Health
Environment
Agricultural research
Networks

The Basic Sciences Group identified opportunities in areas that take advantage of unique human and physical resources (astronomical sciences, geospatial sciences, biodiversity, polar sciences, issues of interest to social sciences), as well as in basic sciences projects involving long-term, sustained support for collaborative research. They also emphasized the need to develop and strengthen mechanisms for exchange of personnel, especially students and junior researchers. Expanding support for networking opportunities (advanced study institutes, workshops, etc) that link researchers is also recommended.

The Nanotechnology Group reaffirmed their commitment to advancing the principles identified in the 2008 "U.S.-Argentine Joint Statement on Increasing Cooperation in Nanotechnology". Participants recognized ongoing cooperation in numerous areas including sensors, nanomaterials for energy, nanomaterials for biotechnology, and nanomedicine. Participants agreed that existing exchange programs (e.g., Fulbright), joint workshops (e.g., NanoMat09), and access to user facilities are valuable mechanisms to promote collaboration. Noting the importance of innovation and technology transfer, such as the U.S. SBIR/STTR program, for the benefit of industry and society, the panel discussed mechanisms to encourage increased collaboration in these areas among Argentine and U.S. scientists. Argentine researchers are encouraged to work with their U.S. counterparts supported by member agencies of the U.S. National Nanotechnology Initiative.

The Earth, Atmospheric, and Space Research Group found many collaborative earth, atmospheric and space projects are underway producing excellent results and involving numerous scientists and engineers. Strengths and scope of current activities reveal new opportunities based on mutual benefits and intellectual engagement for both countries.

The Alternative Energy Research Group affirmed the need for future U.S. Argentina collaboration on large-scale alternative-energy projects in wind, solar, and biofuels as well as nanomaterials for development of fuel cells, energy storage, solar, wind, and biofuel production.

The Health Group identified the U.S. Latin America Cancer Research network as an innovative example of an integrated approach to cancer diagnosis and treatment and should be used as a model for cancer prevention and control as well as for research and treatment of other diseases, e.g. Chagas and dengue.

The Environment Group confirmed that Argentina and the U.S. share common environmental problems, which provide opportunities for fruitful collaboration. There are numerous areas where parallel agencies and institutions in Argentina and the U.S. are addressing these common problems, for example climate modeling, climate change impacts, marine protected areas, and early warning, monitoring and mitigation. Links among them should be strengthened.

The Biotechnology Group recognized that the U.S. and Argentina conduct agriculture biotechnology research independently as well as collaboratively in similar areas of abiotic and biotic stress in plants and on animal health issues of economic importance to both countries. These themes are of global significance as we face the common challenges of food security and sustainable land management for the development of our economies. In the future, we hope to expand scientist to scientist interactions as well as enhance and facilitate the use of existing cooperation mechanisms.

The Network Group encouraged agencies to promote and fund networks that involve both disciplinary and multidisciplinary research and education. The group also emphasized the usefulness of activities like NSF/DOE`s PASI, Workshops, Planning Visits and Student Exchanges in the creation of research and education networks. Finally, they recommend maximizing the use of the existing cyberinfrastructure for collaborative research.

The Joint Committee acknowledged that the Argentina-US meeting contributed to the promotion of mutual understanding and the establishment of a framework to further expand scientific cooperation between the two countries.

Signed in Buenos Aires, Argentina, on September 3, 2010, written in two original copies in English, with each copy being equally effective.

Dr. Alejandro Ceccatto

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